<center>REMARKS</center>

I.   Introduction

        This Amendment is accompanied by a separate
Submission of Formal Drawings, which should satisfy the
Office action's requirement for corrected drawings.

        Claims 1, 3, 5, 12, 18, 20-22, and 25 have been
amended. Claims 2, 4, 6-11, 13-17, 19, 23, and 24 are also
in the case.

        Reconsideration of this application in light of the
following further remarks is hereby respectfully requested.

II. The Requirement for Corrected Drawings

        The Office action requires corrected drawings. A
Submission of Formal Drawings is being filed concurrently
with this Amendment, which should satisfy this requirement.

III. The Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 102

        Claims 1-25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C.
§ 102(e) as anticipated by Venkata et al. U.S. Patent
6,854,044 ("Venkata"). This rejection in respectfully
traversed.

     A.   Claims 1-11

        Claim 1 has been amended to make it clearer that
applicants' invention can work with special characters
"having a plurality of different sizes in terms of how many
bytes they include." For example, applicants' FIG. 2 shows
that applicants' circuitry can work with special characters
of size A1A2 (on the left in FIG. 2) or with special
characters of size A1A1A2A2 (on the right in FIG. 2).
Paragraph [0027] of applicants' specification generalizes
this further by stating that the special characters can be of
the form N(A1)N(A2), where N is greater than zero (and giving

yet another specific example where N is 3 and the special character is A1A1A1A2A2A2).

Venkata does not mention using special characters that can include different numbers of bytes. Venkata therefore does not need and does not show "a special character selection input ..." as specified by applicants in claim 1. The only control input to receiver circuitry 20 that Venkata shows is ENC_DET input 34. This is only a synchronization enabling signal. It is not a signal that controls selection from among a plurality of different special characters having a plurality of different numbers of bytes.

Venkata also does not need and does not show anything comparable to the "special character status output ..." specified by applicants in claim 1. The two control outputs shown by Venkata (FIG. 2; PATTERN_DETECT 56 and RESYNC 54) indicate only (1) that the synchronization pattern has been detected (this is the PATTERN_DETECT signal), and (2) that there may be a need to do another synchronization (this is the RESYNC signal). Neither of these two control output signals indicates which one of several different special characters of different lengths (in terms of numbers of bytes) was used in the synchronization operations because the possibility of using such different length special characters is not even mentioned by Venkata.

The foregoing demonstrates that at least two elements of applicants' claim 1 are not shown by Venkata. Claim 1 is therefore not anticipated by Venkata and should be allowed. The same is true of claims 2-11, all of which are dependent from claim 1.

B. Claims 12-19

Claim 12 has also been amended to make it clearer that applicants' invention works with any of a plurality of

different special characters having any of a plurality of
different lengths in terms of how many bytes they include.

From the above discussion of claim 1, it will be
appreciated that Venkata does not show the "special character
selection signal ..." specified by applicants in claim 12.
It will also be apparent from that earlier discussion that
Venkata does not show the "special character status output
signal indicative of which one of the special characters was
used to align the byte boundaries" as further specified by
applicants in claim 12. Claim 12 is therefore not
anticipated by Venkata. Claim 12 and its dependent claims
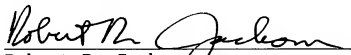13-19 should accordingly be allowed.

    C.   <u>Claims 20-25</u>

Claim 20 has also been amended to make it clearer
that applicants' invention can work with any of a plurality
of different special characters having different lengths in
terms of how many bytes they include. Claim 20 specifies
that there is a "<u>selection</u> signal" that selects from this
plurality of different special characters the special
character that is to be used. The above discussion of the
other claims establishes that Venkata does not show such a
special character <u>selection</u> signal. Claim 20 is therefore
not anticipated by Venkata, and this claim and its dependent
claims 21-25 should accordingly by allowed.

IV. Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 1-25 are allowable. Replacement formal drawings are also being filed. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are accordingly respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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